

Remarks

Applicant has amended the claims after final to place claims in condition for allowance by incorporating the subject matter of claims 17 and 25 (indicated as being allowable by the Examiner) into independent claims 14 and 22, correcting claim dependencies, and deleting claims 17, 19, 21, 25, 27, 29, and 32-45. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that this Amendment be entered after final.

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the foregoing Amendment to the Claims, claims 1-16, 18, 20, 22-24, 26, 28, 30, 31, and 46-51 are pending in the application, of which claims 1, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, and 50 are independent. By the foregoing Amendment, claims 14, 22, 24, and 26 are sought to be amended. Claims 17, 19, 21, 25, 27, 29, and 32-45 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is embraced by this amendment and its entry is respectfully requested. Based on the above Amendment and the remarks set forth below, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding objections and rejections.

Allowance of Claims

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's statement of allowance of claims 1-13, 30, 31, and 46-51.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner, on page 2 of the Office Action, has objected to claims 17, 19, 21, 25, 27, and 29 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. Applicant has amended the base claims (claims 14 and 22) to include the allowable subject matter from claims 17 and 25, and therefore believes that independent claims 14 and 22, and the claims that depend therefrom, respectively, are allowable over the cited art.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second para.

The Examiner, on page 6 of the Final Office Action, has rejected claims 32-39 and 40-45 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has cancelled claims 32-45, rendering this rejection moot.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner, on page 9 of the Final Office Action, has rejected claims 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, and 40-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,725,378 to Schuba *et al.* (hereinafter "Schuba"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended independent claims 14 and 22 to include the allowable subject matter indicated by the Examiner in claims 17 and 25, respectively. Applicant has also cancelled claims

40-44. It is therefore believed that the foregoing Amendment renders the rejection of independent claims 14 and 22 (and the claims that depend therefrom (claims 15, 16, 18, and 20; and claims 23, 24, 26, and 28; respectively)) moot.

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Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all currently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Response is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

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On: 5/30/2006

Signature: Julie Dussault

Julie Dussault

5/30/2006
Date